

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:AMBMFHERZ/FDR

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

INFO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USDOC WASHDC

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:ECIB, EEWT, EFIN, XG, US

SUBJECT: BULGARIAN ATTITUDE TOWARD TRADE AGREEMENT WITH US

1. AMBASSADOR HERZ TALKED BY TELEPHONE MAY 29 WITH VICE PRESIDENT CURRAN OF CHASE MANHATTAN BANK, WHO WAS MEMBER OF THE ROCKEFELLER PARTY, TO CHECK HIS RECOLLECTION OF WHAT ZHIVKOV AND OTHER BULGARIAN LEADERS MIGHT HAVE SAID ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF CONCLUDING TRADE AGREEMENT WITH US. CURRAN REFERRED TO HIS NOTES ON THE ROCKEFELLER CONVERSATION WITH ZHIVKOV.

2. THE POINT MADE BY ZHIVKOV AND OTHERS, CURRAN RECALLED, WAS THAT THE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPASSE WITH THE USSR SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO STAND IN THE WAY OF DEVELOPMENT OF US-BULGARIAN RELATIONS IN TRADE AS WELL AS IN OTHER FIELDS.

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ZHIVKOV MADE CLEAR BULGARIAN SOLIDARITY WITH THE USSR ON THE TRADE LEGISLATION ISSUE, POINTING IN FACT TO BULGARIAN ECONOMIC DEPENDENCE ON THE USSR AND ASKING (ACCORDING TO CURRAN) SOMETHING LIKE "YOU DON'T THINK I AM CRAZY, DO YOU?"

3. AT SAME TIME ZHIVKOV, AS WELL AS THE OTHER BULGARIAN LEADERS REFERRED TO IN REF B, SPOKE ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF CONCLUDING AGREEMENTS WITH THE US; AND ALTHOUGH STRESS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN LAID ON CULTURAL, TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC THERE WAS ALSO MENTION OF COVERING TRADE. DAVID ROCKEFELLER, IN CURRAN'S RECOLLECTION, IN FACT ASKED WHETHER BULGARIANS HAVE IN MIND ONE AGREEMENT COVERING ALL THOSE SUBJECTS OR SEPARATE ONES, AND BULGARIANS SAID THEY COULD BE SEPARATE AND REFERRED TO DRAFTS THEY HAD SUBMITTED TO USG LAST YEAR.

4. AMBASSADOR HERZ'S IMPRESSION FROM THIS CONVERSATION IS THAT THE BULGARIANS ARE INDEED WILLING TO MOVE ALSO ON TRADE, BUT THAT WHEN ZHIVKOV MENTIONED THIS FIELD AS ONE THAT COULD ALSO BE COVERED BY AN AGREEMENT, HE MUST HAVE HAD IN MIND SOME LOOSE KIND OF "UMBRELLA" AGREEMENT THAT COULD COVER TRADE AS WELL AS EXCHANGES. IN CURRAN'S RECOLLECTION, AT LEAST, THERE SEEMS TO BE NOTHING THAT WOULD INDICATE THAT THE BULGARIANS ARE READY AT THIS TIME TO BREAK RANKS WITH THE USSR AND CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT UNDER THE TRADE ACT OF 1974. NEVERTHELESS, THE SUBJECT CLEARLY DESERVES TO BE FURTHER EXPLORED.

5. ONE FURTHER INDICATION THAT ZHIVKOV IS NOT LIKELY TO HAVE HINTED TO ROCKEFELLER THAT THE GOB WAS INTERESTED IN CONCLUDING A TRADE AGREEMENT MEETING THE REQUIREMENTS OF OUR TRADE ACT IS THAT AMBASSADOR HERZ RECALLS A CONVERSATION WITH DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER LUKANOV AT THE JAPANESE NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION, BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN SUBSEQUENT TO THE ROCKEFELLER VISIT. ON THAT OCCASION AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT TO LUKANOV THAT THERE REALLY IS NO LOGICAL REASON WHY BULGARIA NEEDS TO FEEL INHIBITED IN TRADE NEGOTIATIONS BY THE JACKSON-VANIK AMENDMENT, SINCE ALMOST ALL JEWS WHO WISH TO LEAVE HAVE LEFT, AND WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY ZHIVKOV HIMSELF THAT THE DIVIDED FAMILY ISSUE COULD BE SETTLED IN SHORT ORDER. LUKANOV RESPONDED THAT THIS WAS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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"NEW THOUGHT." IF IT WAS NEW TO HIM THEN, HE IS NOT LIKELY TO HAVE PUT IDEAS OF THIS KIND TO AN AMERICAN VISITOR SHORTLY BEFORE.

7. FOR VIENNA: AMBASSADOR HERZ EXPECTS TO BE IN VIENNA JUNE 2 AND 3 AND WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING AN OCCASION FOR HIM TO MEET WITH MR. JUDAR. IT WOULD PROBABLY BE BEST, HOWEVER, NOT TO REFER TO AMBASSADOR'S CONVERSATION WITH MR. CURRAN, TO AVOID ANY IMPLICATION THAT WE HAVE GONE BEHIND JUDAR'S BACK TO CHECK ON INFORMATION HE PROVIDED TO US IN SOFIA. THERE ARE IN FACT ALSO OTHER MATTERS WHICH AMBASSADOR COULD PROFITA-

BLY DISCUSS WITH MR. JUDAR. INGERSOLL

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